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TO THE
PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
LETTER I.

Distresses of England.—Chancellor of the Exchequer's Remedies.—His account of the Revenue.—Standing army that we are to have.—Language of Yorke and Castlereagh upon this subject.—Real state in which we are with regard to the army.—American Navy an object of Jealousy.—Mr. LAW, the Chief Judge's Son, head Jailor. P. S. EPIGRAM on the subject.

London, February 17th, 1816.

It is now my intention to address to you a series of Letters upon the affairs of this snug and "*tight little Island*," being fully persuaded, that it will be useful to you and to the whole world, as far as they can be made to reach, to put you in possession of such facts as will enable you to form a correct judgment of the state of this country after its exploits against the Republicans of France and of some other parts of Europe. Whether you will look upon us with envy, pity, contempt, or hatred, it is impossible for me to say; but, you may be assured, that, excite what feelings I may, I will, as far as I am able, put you in possession of the *truth*, the *whole truth*, and *nothing but* the truth, respecting every thing, of which I have a competent degree of knowledge, relating to public matters, public men, and public institutions, in this country. I know as much about these subjects as most men; what I do not know myself I soon learn from others. You shall have it *all*.

I shall not publish, in *England*, the *whole* of what I write. That would be a great deal worse than *useless*. To you I will send the *whole*; but about the half of what I send you will not be published here, in "*the tight little Island*." The first part of each Letter will be published here; except some passages in it which would be "*worse than useless*" to appear in this country. The *remaining* part, together with the former part, will find their way to you; so that each Letter will make, when published in your country, one whole and complete Register. I shall, perhaps, find it necessary to step aside from this series of Letters, now and then, for the purpose of more immediately address-

ing myself to some person here, as will be soon the case with regard to the Editor or Whipper-in of the Quarterly Review, whose base publication must have particular notice taken of it. But, as the Letters will be *numbered*, they will form an unbroken series of developments, to be found, I will be hardy enough to say, in no other work that ever will appear in print.

Thus, then, here I start by calling your attention to the Report of a Debate in the Honourable House of Commons on the 12th instant, on the subject of our *distresses*, and of the other matters named at the head of this Letter. Of these distresses, I have already given you some feeble notion. It was acknowledged upon this occasion, that they *did exist* in reality. Some particular description of them was given; but, as there is to be a solemn and set discussion upon this subject very soon, I shall not further notice it here, except just to beg your newspaper proprietors to bear in mind, that *our* base and prostituted press has, till within these few days, never said a word about these distresses; but, on the contrary, has been holding this country up to the *envy* and *admiration* of the world, as being, at the end of twenty-two years of war, in the greatest prosperity, while it was covered with military and naval glory, seeming always wholly to *forget* all the events of the war with *your country*.

The *remedy*, proposed by our Chancellor of the Exchequer, is the subject, to which I now wish to call your sober attention. I will first quote his own words, premising only that the distress makes its appearance in the shape of comparative *low price* of farm-produce, in consequence of a diminution of the quantity of paper-money before in circulation. "It was "not to be denied," he said, "that we "were labouring under many embarrassments. Of these embarrassments, and "the remedies which might be applicable, "he should now attempt some development. They had arisen from the circumstances in which the country had "been long placed, and which had operated on the prices of all articles, especially agricultural produce, which had "swollen to a rate quite disproportionate "to the prices of all other commodities. "The alarm of the scarce years of 1793,

" 1799, and 1800, had produced a general opinion, which was indeed well founded, " that the agricultural produce of this country was inadequate to the consumption. At the same time, the uncertainty of supply from abroad was increased. That supply was sometimes stopped, at other times the price of grain was raised by the foreign powers, on whom our supply depended, in proportion to our wants, by the enormous sums exacted for licenses and duties on the grain itself. Having been thus thrown back on our own produce, in years which were not remarkably abundant, the inadequacy of the supply was felt more strongly, and prices continued to rise in proportion. This spur to exertion in that branch of industry increased the agricultural produce to that degree, that it would soon have been fully equal to the wants of the country, had not the foreign markets been re-opened, and corn poured in in such abundance, as to distress the agricultural interest. When this was discovered, protecting measures were proposed, but those measures came after a large supply had actually been received from abroad, and one very productive harvest, together with this very superfluous stock, continued the depression of prices, or sunk them yet lower. In addition to these circumstances, the Government, who had been purchasers to a considerable amount, withdrew from the market. The Victualling-office alone had been in the habit yearly of purchasing 200,000 sacks of flour. The Commissary-General had often made considerable purchases. Whenever Government went into the market, the prices were raised in a greater proportion than if the same additional purchases had been made by individuals, because the payment of Government was sure, and its wants were known to be urgent and irresistible. When Government withdrew itself, and, moreover, from motives of economy, threw back a considerable quantity of stores into the market, a great fall in price was to be expected. Had Parliament before interfered by a Corn Law, much of the evil would probably have been prevented; but the measure which had been proposed had not passed, because the country was not prepared for the measure, and the House was not willing to press it. The Parliament had there-

" fore forbore, till, in effect, the blow at the agricultural interest had been struck. This blow was not felt by the agriculturists alone, but the suffering was necessarily extended to all who were concerned in its prosperity, especially those who supplied the various articles consumed in agriculture. This distress would continue to be felt until the effect of the diminished prices of agricultural articles should have produced the same reduction in other commodities. Such were our embarrassments. The remedies which had been proposed were numerous; many were absurd, and many dangerous; and he should therefore forbear to trouble the House with an enumeration of them. There was one, however, which it was proper to mention, that of suspending the Usury Acts, which had been proposed by an Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Brougham) with a view to the support of credit. If there was a prospect that our difficulties would long continue, and that there were not other more advantageous methods of relieving credit, he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was not disposed to think lightly of this proposition. (*hear, hear!*) But, as he had a remedy to propose which would answer the same end, without the same inconveniency, which might result from the suspension of the Usury Acts, he should not now avail himself of that proposition. The remedies which he had to propose might be divided into two classes: the first, a diminution of taxation, (*hear, hear!*) the other, a system of the measures for the support of public credit. This last was the most important and the most easy of remedies. To illustrate this remedy, he should make use of a vulgar idea, which might, however, serve his purpose better than a more laboured argument. Suppose by a magical operation every individual in the country should find a guinea in his pocket. (*a laugh.*) This supposition was rather visionary. (*a laugh.*) But what would be its effects? Although more than twelve millions of guineas would be thus distributed in the country, no man would be much better able to pay a debt of 10*l.* than at present. The advantage would be momentary; there would be no relief from the difficulties in which we were now involved. The temporary relaxation from labour, &c. out of the question, it would be

" some time before this sum accumulated, " so as to form a part of the active capital " of the country. Now, the effect would " be far different, if this 12 or 15 millions " were distributed among the Country " Banks. Every man who could give " good security would be accommodated, " trade and agriculture would revive, " and our present distresses would vanish. " Though it was not his intention to give " a guinea to every man, nor 15 millions " to the Country Banks, (*though this had* " *been suggested,*) yet, from the operation " of these two methods of employing a " given capital, the different effects of tax- " ation and borrowing might be conjectured. If a tax, to the amount of a gu- " nea on each person, were imposed on " the country, supposing it wisely distri- " buted, the effect would *not be distress-* " *ing*; but the present distress would be " much augmented by taking a sum to the " same amount *by way of loan* from the " capitalists. If, therefore, no money " were borrowed this year, and a sum of " 14 millions were *swept away* by the " Sinking Fund, a great capital would " thus be thrown back into the country, " which must have a most beneficial effect " on public credit."

Now, when you have read this attentively, I must request you to keep in view this fact; that the average price of wheat has fallen from 15 or 17 shillings a bushel to an average of rather less than 6 shillings a bushel; and that all the taxes of the country have continued undiminished. I must also request you to keep in view, that these taxes far exceed the annual *rent* of all the land and houses. I must further request you to keep in view, that Gold, which is now about *four* pounds an ounce in our paper-money, was some time ago, nearly *six* pounds an ounce in this same paper-money. You will see, then, very clearly, that the distress of the farmer and trader arises simply from this cause, that they have now, in fact, more than double as much taxes to pay as they had when wheat was 15 shillings a bushel; because the *nominal* amount of the taxes being the same, the farmer must now give the tax-gatherer more than two bushels of wheat, or the price of them, instead of the one bushel, or the price of it, that he gave to the tax-gatherer before this reduction of price took place.

If this be clear and sound reasoning, you must, of course, see, that this Chan-

cellor of ours has but a *very confused* no- " tion of the *causes* of the distress; and, as " to his *remedy*, let me beg of you, for de- " cency's sake, not to give way to those " emotions which it seems so manifestly " calculated to excite. The remedy of *re- " ducing taxes* would, indeed, be efficacious; " but, that he does not intend to adopt, " except as far as to the taking off about *seven* " millions out of *seventy*; and, to make up " for this, he borrows, *without any vote of* " the *House of Commons*, and yet perfectly " legally, six millions from the *Bank*. So, " you see the use that a *National Bank* " may come to in time. Not that I believe " that there would have been the least diffi- " culty in prevailing upon that Honourable " House to vote for such a loan. I know it " too well to doubt, for a moment, of its " readiness to come to such a vote. But, " the *fact* is as I have stated it.

The diminution of taxes, then, is not " what this gentleman looks upon as a *re- " medy* for the distresses that now over- " spread this triumphant country. He re- " lies upon an *operation*; a grand opera- " tion; a wonder-working operation of " capital, thrown into and about this nice " little, tight little Island. As I read his " speech, I really thought, he was going to " propose to give us all a guinea each; and, " at last, I thought, till he explained him- " self, that he meant to distribute fourteen " or twenty millions worth of Bank notes " amongst the Country Banks, that they " might lend them to the farmers, and thus, " by raising the price of wheat, enable the " farmers to pay the taxes. This would have " been a *real remedy* for us; but, it would " have lowered the value of the paper- " money; it would have raised the price of " gold; it would have turned all exchanges " against the country; and, then, we should " have been drifting back again to the *other* " rock.

What is it that he means, then? How " does he mean to throw fourteen millions " of money about the country, or to get it " into the hands of the Country Bankers? " He means, he says, to raise fourteen " millions *in taxes*; that is to say, to keep " the *sinking fund* in operation; that is to " say, to do no more than was done last " year; that is to say, to raise fourteen " millions *in taxes* to purchase up stock " from individuals, that those individuals " may lend the amount of their stock to the " farmers and traders, or purchase with it " the property of the farmers and land-

owners and traders. This is his *grand operation*. This is his *remedy*. I will leave you to admire his *illustrations*, which appear to have nothing in nature or in art equal to them ; and, now, let us leave him and his illustrations aside, for a few minutes, and apply a little common sense to this grand and wonder-working scheme.

You know, because all the world knows, that prices depend upon the *quantity of money in circulation in the whole of a country*. Now, then, will this notable scheme *add to the quantity of money in circulation*? It is certain, that the purchasing of fourteen millions worth of Stock of individuals will enable those individuals to lend money to the landed people, and, finally, to purchase the land itself. This is very certain. In this way the scheme, if it could be carried into effect for any length of time, would assuredly operate. But, how it is to *relieve the landed people* it is quite impossible to conceive. The fourteen millions may be *thrown* about the country ; some of it may fall amongst the farmers ; but, be it kept in mind, that the fourteen millions must *first be collected in taxes*, and that, too, observe, from the very people, principally, amongst whom it is to be *thrown*, but thrown only in the shape of money *lent* to them, or exchanged for their *property*. Was there ever in the whole world such a scheme of *relief* as this? The farmer and trader want high prices to enable them to pay the taxes ; and the minister proposes to *relieve* them, not by the raising of prices, but by continuing to tax them, and to pass these taxes into the hands of fundholders and others who receive taxes, that these may *lend them* to the distressed payers of taxes.

It must be clear to every man of common understanding, that it is the *low price* of farm produce, compared with the expenses of raising it, which expenses consist chiefly of taxes, that has ruined the farmers and traders, and that is now ruining the manufacturers. So far from pretending that his scheme will raise the price of farm produce, the schemer says, that other goods will, in time, *come down* to the scale of wheat and meat ; and yet he seems to expect, that the people will be able to pay as much money in taxes when wheat is 6s. a bushel as they were when wheat was 15s. a bushel. This is the grand point. Upon the ability to collect taxes *every thing* hinges belonging to this

government ; every thing, abroad as well as at home. Upon the *ability*, I say, and upon that *alone* ; for, as to any *will* or *inclination* about the matter, we shall see how that question stands by and by.

The *revenue*, therefore, and its *flourishing condition*, is a topic of great importance. The Chancellor tells us, that the commerce and revenue are in a most flourishing state. I will here again give his own words.—“ We were now in a “ *peculiar crisis*. At the close of a long “ contest, in which we had struggled so “ successfully for our own honour and “ safety, and for the honour and liberty of “ Europe, in which we had added so “ largely to our naval and military glory, “ we could not immediately *sit down and repose ourselves*, as if we had enjoyed “ uninterrupted peace. But he should “ show by reference to facts and documents, which would soon be before the “ House in an official shape, that our re- “ sources were as entire as could be ex- “ pected by the most sanguine, and that if “ we did not immediately enjoy all the “ benefits which might be expected from “ the opening of foreign ports to our com- “ merce, it was only necessary to ex- “ ercise a small portion of that firmness and “ perseverance, which had been so often “ recommended to the House by his pre- “ decessor and himself, and which had “ never been recommended in vain, to bear “ the nation *triumphantly* through all its “ difficulties. The statement which he “ should make, would naturally divide “ itself into two branches : The first was “ the state of the Finances in the present “ year, together with his opinion as to the “ causes and probable remedies of our “ present difficulties. The next branch “ was the amount of the Supply, and the “ Ways and Means to meet it, which “ would be proposed in a more advanced “ period of the session. He should first “ give a comparative statement of the “ revenue of the last, compared with that “ of the present year, which would throw “ some light on our present situation, and “ the probable prospect for the future. A “ Right Honourable Gentleman had ex- “ pressed doubts whether the general “ statement of the produce of the last “ year’s revenue, if minutely examined, “ would be as favourable as it at first “ appeared to be. He should therefore “ give some of the principal heads, com- “ paring the produce of the last with that

" of the preceding year. The produce of " the Customs, in the year ending Jan. 5, " 1815, was 11,059,000*l.*; that of the " year ending January 5, 1816, was " 10,487,000*l.* It was, however, to be " remembered, that in the latter sum " was not included the amount of the " war duty on tonnage and exported Bri- " tish goods, which had usually produced " between 6 and 700,000*l.* which would " raise this year above the preceding, " which had exceeded all former years. " The Excise presented a still more fa- " vorable result. The produce of 1814 " was 25,145,000*l.*; that of 1815, was " 26,562,000*l.* being an increase of " 1,400,000*l.* beyond all preceding years. " This increase, too, did not arise from " any new taxes, except an additional tax " on Licenses, which perhaps had pro- " duced 2 or 300,000*l.* The Stamp Duties " of 1814 amounted to 5,618,000*l.*; those " of 1815 to 5,865,000*l.* On this head " it was, however, to be recollect, that " there had been a large addition to the " duties on Stamps, to which the increased " produce was in part attributable. The " Assessed Taxes of 1814 were 6,412,000*l.* " those of 1815, 6,214,000*l.* being a di- " minution of 200,000*l.* The Property " Tax of 1814 was 14,218,000*l.* the pro- " duce of the same tax in 1815 was " 14,318,000*l.* being an increase of just " 100,000*l.* The Land Tax, on account " of the constant progress of redemption, " was subject to diminution. The pro- " duce of this tax in 1814, was 1,285,000*l.*; " in 1815, it was 1,179,000*l.*—The total " amount of the produce of the revenue in " 1814, was 65,430,000*l.*; in 1815 it was " 66,442,000*l.* This, it would be seen, " was an increase of more than a million " above a year which had also exceeded " any former year. Thus much as to the " revenue of the country; and on this " head we might *rest satisfied* as to the " prospect which was held out as to the " future productiveness of the taxes."

So, at the end of all this bloodshed, we have arrived at a "*peculiar crisis.*" We "cannot yet sit down and repose our- "selves." We yet stand in need of "*perse- verance;*" and, if we do but *persevere*, we shall be finally borne "*triumphant*" through "*all our difficulties.*" There, you Yankee fellows! What do you think of that? If we have but a sufficiency of *perseverance*, it will bear us triumphantly;

yes, sneer at us as much as you like, *tri- umphantly*, through all our difficulties!

To descend, however, from that height of enthusiasm, to which the eloquence of the Right Honourable financier must naturally carry his readers, and to speak in plain language, what he means, in this passage, is, that if we will but continue to pay as heavy taxes during peace as we paid during the war, we shall still get along without any change of system, and without being absolutely starved to death, or destroyed by any convulsion from within, or any invasion from without: his meaning is, that we shall finally *triumph*, by *paying taxes*, over all the difficulties that now surround us. High, however, as is the compliment that our taxing Chief pays us, in thus boldly predicting our triumph, the value of the compliment is not half seen 'til we know what the *thing* is, over which we are to *triumph*; 'til we get a full view of the nature and extent of these said *difficulties*, by which, as the Chancellor acknowledges, we are now beset.

I, therefore, shall go into this part of the matter, a little, in this place. At the outset, I proposed to postpone the subject of our *distresses*, 'til the discussion on it had taken place in parliament; but, an unexpected occurrence has induced me to change my plan. I have, for more than a year past, been endeavouring to prepare this bawling, and bragging, and war-loving country for the miseries it now feels. Of this fact you, in America, are not unacquainted, because my divers essays, on the subject, have, I see, been re-published in your country. I have more recently described the distresses of the country. But, I being a *Jacobin*, the description given by me may be distrusted by the friends of "the *Bulwark of Religion and Social Order.*" For this reason I wished to wait to get this description from the lips of our loyal Honourable Housemen. Yet, a description from them, however, might possibly be looked upon as proceeding from party motives, or as being exaggerated by the reporter of their speeches. But, fortune has thrown into my hands, since I began writing this letter, a description of this distress, under the *hand* of a most *loyal* and most *learned* gentleman, an *admirer of Pitt*, a *supporter of the war*, and one who *exults at the overthrow of the new order of things in France.* This person is a

Mr. PRESTON, a Member of Parliament, a great Conveyancing Lawyer, second, I believe, in his profession, to no one in the kingdom; a man well acquainted with the tenures of all sorts of property; with the effects of all sorts of contracts; with the extent of the encumbrances and embarrassments of proprietors of every description; and having, perhaps, had the opinions of a great number of noblemen and gentlemen of large estates, before he sent to the press that pamphlet, of which some one has got me an early copy, and which pamphlet is to be looked upon as containing the result of the inquiries and the reflections of this man of such extensive information, aided by the advice and assistance of his numerous and widely-spread connexions.

Well, readers of the Register, now, what does *this* loyal gentleman recommend? Why he recommends what I recommended many years ago; namely, to LOWER THE RATE OF INTEREST, INCLUDING THAT OF THE FUND-ED DEBT. And, without such a measure, he says, the country must go to utter ruin. Shall I not now, then, be permitted to exult a little? But, as I shall more fully notice this scheme of Mr. PRESTON in a future Letter, I will here check my inclination to laugh, sing, and dance, which inclination is naturally produced by this dawn of that broad day of light, which, in spite of all the efforts of a corrupt press, appears now to be forcing its way in upon us: I will here check this inclination, and will, for the present, give you the picture of the present state of this country as drawn by the hand of this most *loyal* admirer of Pitt, the Sinking Fund, the war, and the putting down of the new order of things in France. Here is the picture of “the envy and admiration of the world.”

“Whoever looks around him at the present moment, and views the distresses in which the country is involved, from the inability of a large part of the population to answer the demands of government; whoever examines the great change which has taken place in the condition of a large part of the community, hurled from wealth to poverty; from affluence to distress; whoever inquires into the fact, and finds that taxes are levied from a considerable part of the people by means of legal process; or whoever finds, as the fact is, the poor

“are increasing daily in number, while the ability of the persons who are by law bound to contribute to their maintenance is diminished—whoever shall know, as the fact is, that a large part of the community are in want of employment, though willing to labour, and that their former employers are unable to afford to pay their wages; that even 50 men are to be met in different parishes asking for employment, and urging it to be the interest of the farmer, rather to pay them for actual labour than to pay them in a state of idleness from the poor rate, while the farmer, though convinced of the justice of the appeal, is totally unable to meet this appeal to his interest; further, that a large portion of that industrious part of the community, the little farmers, (the favourites of the ancient system,) with their large families, (the best hope of the state, and most virtuous part of the community,) are ceasing to be farmers from necessity, and becoming pensioners on the poor rate, while in some townships, the persons who formerly contributed to the poor, are appealing for relief on the ground of their own poverty; and numbers of them obliged to abandon the cultivation of their farms, are become burdens on those parts of the parish which alone are cultivated, thus taxing the industry of their neighbours, and hastening them to the same extremity of ultimate indigence—must admit there is something wrong in the system, and that necessity, and not the spirit of complaint and disaffection, imposes the duty of examining into these evils, that they may be understood and fairly met. The person who supposes this picture to be overcharged will find himself mistaken. As far as extensive and diligent inquiry and research, and communication from different districts, and from persons of the highest respectability residing in counties distant from each other, have afforded information to the writer of these observations, the picture is not coloured too high! All these evils exist in a greater degree than he has painted them; particularly in Ireland and in Wales, and some of the western counties, and even in Norfolk, and other improved districts. In some places the lands are actually deserted, and growing no other crop than weeds. In Huntingdonshire, it is said, that a circuit

" of 3,000 acres is abandoned ; and in other places, and in some not far distant from the metropolis, the like occurrences may be found ; and many prudent proprietors of the soil are content to forego their rents rather than suffer their farms to be untenanted and thrown out of cultivation, and the labourers deprived of employment, and the poor of their allotted means of support. Are these evils unexpected ? certainly not, by the writer of these observations. He anticipated and predicted them, and humbly endeavoured, as far as it was in his power to lead the country to a different result ! Are the community benefited by that cheap price of the necessities of life they deemed so essential to their happiness and comfort ? It is confidently believed they are not. Our home manufacturers—our tradesmen—and various other classes of the community, are now convinced that they cannot ruin the agricultural interest by reducing the prices of corn and provisions below the expense of growing them ; or annihilate the rents of the proprietors of the soil without partaking in their ruin ; and that cheap bread is no blessing to those who are deprived of the means of earning by their labour or their industry, that quantity of it which is necessary for the subsistence and support of life."— By the destruction of the circulating medium, a total inability to purchase exists, and a value depreciated by the reduction of the rental, is still further depreciated by the competition to sell ! and who is benefited by this sudden, extraordinary, and unexpected change ? no one besides the capitalist, who can realize his money, (and how few are they,) and purchase land at the reduced price ; and the funded proprietor, the creditor of the public, who retains an income to the extent of more than one half the rental of the kingdom, without any diminution, whilst the unfortunate debtor, in the shape of landed interest, is to be content with two third parts of that income which he possessed when he, *on the faith of the continuance of that income*, concurred so liberally in granting those supplies, which are now his bane and his ruin. The former system of circulating medium is so altered that it exists only in name. While the wealthy farmer supplied the country

" banker, and the banker supplied his needy neighbours, and still more the manufacturer, the surplus capital found its way to the metropolis, and to the principal cities and towns ; and there administered usefully to the purposes of commerce, by giving to tradesmen the benefit of that credit which their property and their industry justified. The change of the system, the revulsion from a state of extensive circulation to a precarious and scanty supply, has materially injured men engaged in manufactures and commerce, and has produced a succession of bankruptcies among bankers, and those dependent on them for a necessary supply, to keep up the circulation once put in motion. The patients who had been fed highly, could not bear to be reduced at once to so meagre a diet ; and whoever will make inquiries among commercial and manufacturing classes of the community, engaged in the home trade, will soon learn that, with some few exceptions, this class of the community has gained no advantage by the change. The present unfortunate state of the country presents the lamentable history of Government suing executions for taxes, and for balances in the hands of receivers, &c. Bankers, many of them receivers, are thus called on to pay the deposits with them : they again call on their debtors ; and the receivers are using the harsh process of extents in aid ; Mortgagees are enforcing their securities from the difficulty of obtaining interest ; and, as to bankers, they, from the necessity of having ready money, and needy or improvident landlords, are levying their rents by distresses !!! What a wretched and melancholy picture ! at a period, too, when the extent of the stamp laws, and the expense of litigation, have rendered it more wise to abandon debts of small amount, than to incur the loss of a suit to recover them. A debt of 20*l.* is no longer worth the certain extra expense beyond taxed costs, of recovering it. And, that modern production of mistaken humanity, the Insolvent Debtor's Act, enables the unrighteous or unprincipled debtor, to treat his creditor with derision and contempt."

Such, Americans—such, Englishmen—such is the picture which Mr. PRESTON gives of the "Bulwark," at the close of its struggle against the French Revolution and

against the “successful example of Democratic Rebellion” in America. It is, indeed, only a *part* of the picture, which this gentleman has given the world, as I shall show in a future letter; and, indeed, as will be seen from the pamphlet itself, when it is republished in *America*, as I will take care it shall be. So, you see, Mr. PRESTON, that you are in the high road to fame as an author. I owe this to you, Sir. Gratitude demands it at my hands. I have stood, as a forlorn hope, for a great many years. Quite alone; surrounded by the enemy; shot at from every battery, and from behind every bush; made prisoner of war in one instance, and only escaped with the loss of all the cash in my pocket with that of no small part of my baggage, and with paying a ransom into the bargain. How pleasant, therefore, is it to me to see myself, at last, joined by so respectable and zealous a combatant, come over a volunteer to me from the numerous battalions of the system! How cheering is now the prospect! Defection has manifestly begun in the enemy’s camp. Come on, my lads! Repair to my standard. You shall be well treated, and shall have promotion according to your deserts. No corrupt influence shall fill the posts under my command; and, as Mr. PRESTON, though not a very *able* coadjutor, has led the way, I think myself bound to reward his zeal and valour by making him, at once, my Lieutenant General.

To return now to the Chancellor’s account of the *Revenue*; who does not see, that it is *impossible* for his *prospect* to be fair? Who does not see, that accounts made up upon receipts of many quarters of *back assessments*, supposing them to be *all correct*, can afford no rational hope for the future? Who does not see, that the export to America is never to be *repeated*? Who does not know, in short, if he knows any thing at all of the way in which these accounts are made up, what the whole of the statement is, and that, therefore, not a word more need be said respecting it.

But, I put it to any man of common sense, whether, if what Mr. Preston says be true; if his description of the state of property and of the distresses of the country be correct, it be possible to collect sixty-four or sixty-five millions a year in this country. If, as he observes at page 5 of his pamphlet, the country is now placed “in a condition, which makes taxation that to which the Writer DARES

“not give a name;” if this be the condition of the country *now*, what must it be under the *same* weight of taxes in a year’s time? Thus far the farmers have been able, in general, to draw upon their saved money, their live stock, and their credit, to pay the taxes. What are they to do when these are exhausted? How are they to pay the taxes then? If, even now, taxation be such as Mr. PRESTON dares not give a *name* to it; if it be a thing which he, a Member of Parliament, dares not truly describe; this, while it lets a dismal fact, as to the present, escape to the world, will enable that world to guess pretty correctly at what we have to expect in future.

This brings us to the question of the *standing army*, and induces us to read with great attention the report of the *Speeches of Yorke and Castlereagh*, as explanatory of the *real situation* of the tight little Island, or, rather, Islands, *with regard to that army*.

We must, therefore, when we have put these reported speeches upon record here, duly reflect upon their contents, and then make the observations that may suggest themselves. I will insert these speeches *entire*, to avoid the imputation of garbling, though a small part of each might suffice.

“Mr. YORKE protested against the language made use of by Gentlemen on the other side of the House, and more especially by the Gentleman who had spoken last. They wished to have it understood that the establishment proposed this year was a permanent establishment. Now, if he had understood his Right Honourable Friend, his proposal related merely to the establishment for the present year, and the permanent military establishment was to come afterwards under the consideration of the House. After such a war as that in which we had been engaged, it was utterly impossible in the first year to approximate any thing like a permanent peace establishment. Was this the case immediately after the conclusion of the American war? Mr. Pitt proposed his permanent peace establishment three years after the end of that war. He hoped that such an important subject as that of the army, would be treated, when before the House, with all the discretion and coolness which it demanded. Hitherto the peace establishment has been formed on so narrow a scale, that most of the difficulties we had exper-

" enced in the beginning of the war, had
" arisen from the narrow establishment
" kept up in time of peace. What he
" wished was, not an extensive establish-
" ment, but one sufficient to defend our
" extensive possessions from the extensive
" dangers to which they were exposed.
" It was impossible, after the difficulties
" through which we had struggled, *and*
" considering the present state of moral
" feeling in the world, to have such an
" establishment as that at the end of the
" American war. Let any man look at
" our possessions, and say if it was possi-
" ble to have such an establishment now
" as we had in 1790. After what had
" passed in Europe, it would be a long
" time before men's minds could be com-
" posed to a state of peace. The peace
" we had obtained was glorious—he hoped
" it would be permanent—and that the
" feelings of mankind would lead them to
" abstain from war; but the truest way to
" prevent war was *to be well armed.* [Hear
" hear!] Though the French army was
" at present disbanded, we could not say
" that it might not one day rise *from its*
" *ashes;* and were it not for the system
" of coercion now adopted, we might
" soon see it rise from its ruins. Of the
" 99,000 men, 25,000 were for England,
" and 25,000 for Ireland, and the remain-
" der for our colonies. There was no
" part of the proposal so painful to him as
" that respecting Ireland; but in the pre-
" sent state of that country, he was afraid
" the whole of this amount would be *found*
" *necessary.* With respect to the colonies,
" he could not conceive that any consider-
" able reduction could take place here."

" LORD CASTLEREAGH wished to im-
" press on the House what had been alto-
" gether lost sight of by Gentlemen on the
" other side of the House, namely, that
" the question of expenditure of the pre-
" sent year was totally unconnected with
" that of a permanent Peace Establish-
" ment, and that expense could not possi-
" bly be taken as a criterion of that of
" future years. It was only necessary to
" re-examine the statements of his Right
" Honourable Friend, to see that he had
" opened considerable branches of expen-
" diture which could not recur in future
" years, and which were as much to be
" considered in the light of war expenses
" as any of those of last year. It was not
" possible that this country, with its force
" spread over the globe, could be reduced

" at once to a proper Peace Establish-
" ment. Even with respect to the forces
" in France, for instance, a country at our
" very door, they had not been yet re-
" duced so long as to enable them to dis-
" continue the services of the Militia. It
" would still be *some time before the Mi-*
" *litia could be reduced,* and it would re-
" quire still an additional time to bring
" home the Navy. He was prepared,
" however, to admit with the Right Ho-
" nourable Gentleman, that it was only in
" the Army that any great difference of
" opinion could exist, as to the proper ex-
" tent of our establishments. With re-
" spect to the 40,000 or 50,000 men to be
" reduced, it was impossible that this re-
" duction could take place without consi-
" derable time. He could point out
" 2,200,000 out of the 19 millions, for
" the expense of corps which would be
" discontinued, as soon as Government
" could be enabled. Another two mil-
" lions ought to be taken for the Navy.
" If there were added 1½ million due to
" the Bank, two millions under the head
" of Ordnance, and one million of East In-
" dia Debt, there would be found, in all,
" at least between eight and nine millions,
" which was not connected with the pub-
" lic service of the year. He deprecated
" the principle that we were to be the
" only military power who should *not act*
" *on the military principle of keeping up*
" *an army* which should bear some pro-
" portion to that of other states. The
" Noble Lord stated, that it had been de-
" clared by Mr. Pitt, that he regretted
" nothing more than the low establish-
" ments which he had proposed to this
" country in 1792—a year when another
" great Statesman, Mr. Burke, had declar-
" ed France to be blotted from the face
" of Europe. If the House reflected on
" all the strong measures to which they
" had been reduced, to obtain that army
" which had conquered peace for them,
" they would be cautious how far they
" proposed an undue reduction of our es-
" tablishments. These establishments
" would give them such an army *at the*
" *commencement of a war,* as could not be
" obtained in this country without long
" and painful exertions. In 1802, after
" the peace of 1801, the force proposed
" for Ireland was 23,000, and that for
" Great Britain 47,000. In the state of
" that country, which was not politically
" but socially agitated, no great change in

" the establishment could well take place. " That for Britain was considerably lower now than it was in 1802, and, indeed, " it was lower than prudence required, " were it not considered that *the force in France was always at our command*, or " was at least an advanced guard of our army. But he would ask, could the same forces suffice for us now when our establishments were so many, as sufficient when they were so few? would they tear down establishments which had been reared at so much expense—the Ordnance, the Military Schools, the Dock Yards, &c.? Every thing in the country was totally altered since 1792, and we could not now return to our former state. We ought not alone to look at the question merely in an economical point of view, but to adopt a more enlarged and statesman-like determination. The internal duty of Great Britain alone required a force of between 13 and 14,000 men for dock yards and garrisons, &c.; and a great part of our revenue depended on having such a force. If the House, therefore, were determined to feed, what he considered the worst features of the country, by hollow clamations about economy, they would lose more in the revenue than they would gain by any saving. [Hear, hear, hear!] The House ought also to consider, that supposing the establishment 97,000, it never could be kept up to within a tenth of the nominal amount, and that the deficiency would, of course, have to fall on the service at home. They were to consider, too, that it was not merely the number of men—the pay had also been doubled since 1792, and the pensions, &c. highly increased. He deprecated any hasty conclusions on this subject, calculated to make the country feel that there was only one object necessary, a reduction of our taxation [hear! hear!] The Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Brougham) who had claimed the reduction of all our war taxes, amounting to 24 millions, in performance of the pledge to the country, by proving too much, had proved nothing at all.—This measure would only involve the country in ruin."

Thus, then, there is little *disguise*. The whole intention is pretty plainly and boldly stated; and now we have only to observe upon the nature of that intention as thus exposed to us. But, as such obser-

vations would be superfluous in England, they will be published only in America.

Now, then, it is necessary to observe, first, that, for some weeks past, it has been matter of doubt, amongst the best-informed men, whether the Boroughmongers would pass laws to take from the fund-holders part of their property, by lowering the interest of the debt, and finally sweep all the monied race away; or, whether they would still uphold the funding system. The inducements to the former were considered very great; because such a measure would, at once, have relieved the land of all its burdens, and would have brought all the farmers and country people into a state of comfort. But, it appears to have been feared, that the enemy, DEMOCRACY, would, seeing the incapacity of the government to raise money to hire Germans, and to employ its satellites at home, again rear its head, and that it might, this time, succeed in its efforts. Therefore, it has been resolved, if we may judge from the estimates and intended taxation, to uphold the funding system, at least for the present, even if, to do that, it should be necessary to employ soldiers as the direct agents in the collection of the taxes in England, as they long have been employed in that capacity, and with perfect success, in Ireland.

All, therefore, that YORKE and CASTLE-REAGH say about the establishment being greater this year than next year; all their pretexts about colonies; all this is intended merely to amuse the foolish part of the people. The real objects of the standing army being to keep down the reformers, who wish to overthrow the Boroughmongers and to leave the French to themselves, and to enforce the collection of the taxes necessary for the support of the army and of the men who are able to lend the Boroughmongers money to carry on war again, if they find it necessary, into the heart of Europe.

What a sham is it, then, for any one to pretend to believe, that there is any thing worthy of the name of public liberty, or of private property, left in England! What base hypocrisy it is for any writer, especially in America, where the example of England has so much weight, to affect to consider us in the light of a *free nation*! And to appear to take it for granted, that the term *military despotism* does not apply to our present state! We have

seen the parliament passing laws under the protection of the bayonet ; we have seen soldiers acting in the capacity and superseding the office of constables ; we have seen, in divers parts of both England and Ireland, judges conducted to and from the Court Houses, and guarded while there, by troops of dragoons and regiments of regular foot soldiers ; we have seen the same troops, in both countries, employed to superintend the imprisonment in jail, and the execution of people on the gallows : and, notwithstanding all this, the world has been made to believe, that we, happy Englishmen, whose birthright is freedom, know nothing at all of military despotism, and that we acted in the most generous manner in spending our money to put down "a military despot" in France, though we did it by the hands of notorious slaves and barbarians.

YORKE says, that the "present state of moral feeling in the world, the uncomposed state of men's minds, the possibility of resuscitation in the army of France;" these, he says, are reasons for keeping up a great standing army in this country, and for taxing the people for that purpose. He forgot, apparently, another object, namely, his sinecure place of three thousand pounds a year, which was given to him for the stand that he made in the affair of the Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke, where it was difficult to find, even amongst the briefless lawyers, of which Yorke was one, men base enough to enroll themselves under the banners of Perceval. He seems to have overlooked this object of a standing army ; and, yet, I will engage that it was very near his heart, and that he is perfectly well convinced, that, without an overawing military force, that place, that scandalous robbery of the people, would not be safe for a single week. But, as to his avowed objects, what are we to think of a man, who could openly declare that it was right to keep up a military force as a guard against the feelings and thoughts of men ? As a defence of the government against the moral sense of the people ? He knows well that a tenth part of all the produce of the earth is taken away to be given to support about eighteen thousand persons, to say nothing about Dignitaries, in England and Ireland, whose business it is to teach the people. He knows as well as any body, (for he has been a chief actor in the thing,) that hundreds of thousands of pounds are

expended on a press, nine tenths of which, in all its branches, is sold to the government. He knows, that the very debates are a sham, intended to delude and keep in darkness the minds of the people. And yet knowing all this, he still fears. He still is afraid of the natural proneness of the human mind to seek light. He still is haunted with the dread that truth will finally make its way. And, therefore, he upholds the necessity of numerous bayonets to keep the minds of men in subjection.

It has been frequently asserted, that the effects of the French revolution were such as to make its example harmless ; that its progress and consequences were so laudable, that no other people, however oppressed, would seek to get rid of their oppressions by a change of the system of their government ; that, in short, the French, while they sent forth the bane, also supplied the world with the antidote. Those who had said this have long proved themselves to have been hypocrites ; because, when told to let the French alone then, and suffer the *antidote to work its way*, they always answered by new levies and subsidies for war against them ; and, at last, we have seen them plunge this nation into the lowest abyss of distress, for the purpose of forcing back tyranny upon the French. But, even when that is accomplished ; even after all the world has seen the French Revolution end in the subjugation of the country, in a partial surrender of territory of France, in the imposing of a tribute upon that people to be paid to foreigners, and in the keeping her under the government of an English viceroy, as Wellington really is ; even after all this, these tools of our Boroughmongers are afraid that the example of the French revolution may still have a dangerous effect on the minds of men. The truth is, these hypocritical men know, that the minds of men are never convinced by the use of the bayonet ; they know, that if the cause of freedom be doomed to perish on the Continent of Europe, (an hypothesis which we do not adopt,) it will have been owing, in our opinion, to a combination of despotic power, chiefly instigated and urged on by a corrupt body of men in England, aided by the delusion practised on this at once brave, and laborious, and enterprising, and envious, and credulous, and, I am afraid I must add, in some respects, base, peo-

ple; and singularly favoured by the vain ambition of a man, into whose hands the cause of freedom unfortunately fell, and by whom it was, through most culpable vanity, betrayed. Our hypocritical Borough despots, and their artful tools, like Yorke and Castlereagh, know well, that this is the opinion of thousands of men in England; and, the *antidote*, as they call it, afforded by the *result* even of the French revolution, is so far from being an antidote, that the measures afforded to procure the discomfiture of liberty on the continent have only tended to inculcate the justice and necessity of a radical reformation here. This they know to be the conviction in the minds of the friends of freedom, with whom our tyrants know that England still abounds, notwithstanding all their deeds of corruption on the one hand, and of coercion on the other.

These Borough despots, and their agents, have done much to degrade and brutalify the people; and, I confess, that there are few to be found, very few indeed, who are able to get rid of that deep-rooted insular pride and selfishness, which have led the people of England to assent to the infliction of so much injury on mankind; but, there is still stuff enough left to overset these usurpers in a week, if they were not defended by a standing army. This they know; and, from this day forward, they will depend solely upon the protection of a military force. It is notorious, that, at the time when Perceval was shot, the whole band felt a *panic* such as was hardly ever witnessed; and, perhaps, never in the world. They thought, for some hours, that the act of Bellingham was only the onset of the execution of a general assassination, or slaughtering plot. Soldiers were instantly sent for; but, in such a cautious way as not to let the whole corps know what was the matter, till a detachment had been brought to the House; another to the Prince's Palace; another to the several offices at Whitehall; another to guard the Queen and Princesses; another to the tower; and so on. Lest there should be risings in the great towns, upon the receipt of the news, and the conspirators in London (who were supposed to be numerous) should receive encouragement from their probable risings, which were thought to be likely to attract the soldiers to join them, the departure of the mail coaches was retarded for some hours. All letters to the country were stopped,

and fifty people, perhaps, set to open and read them.

When the mails went off, printed papers were sent by them to every part of the kingdom, to be circulated from the several post offices, informing the people, that there was "*no conspiracy in London*," that "*all was quiet*," that the government had brought in "*a large number of troops*," that the people in London were "*outrageous against Bellingham*," and that he was sent to prison, and "*would be hanged in forty-eight hours*." The fear did not die away for a considerable time. Troops were kept hovering round London. Perceval's body was escorted to the grave by a small army. The Ministers and Boroughmongers went out of town as much as possible. Those who remained, had police officers in their houses. And, they began to feel themselves reduced to the state in which their odious tyranny, unjustly ascribed to the king, had, for many years, placed him, there being constantly to attend him, everywhere out of doors, two common Thief Takers, named Macmanus and Townsend, and the state coach, in which he went to the House of Lords, being made *bullet proof*, an inheritance which has actually descended to his son!

Perceval, a little before his death, proposed to have a large piece of ground enclosed, in one of the outskirts of London, (in addition to all the Barracks already in London and the neighbourhood) sufficient to contain a Barrack, Stables, and other accommodations, for a *small army* of horse, foot, and artillery. His death, and especially the *manner* of it, put an end to this grand prop to "*our happy constitution*," of which prop this very Yorke and Castlereagh were strenuous advocates. Perceval, who was certainly the most malignant of all the tools of tyranny that we have ever seen, not even excepting Castlereagh, seems to have had a presentiment, that he should not die in his bed. He was conscious of having done so many wicked and cruel acts; his affected *religiousness* had been so completely exposed in his seat-selling, and his attempt to force Quintin Dick to vote for the acquittal of the Duke of York; his hypocrisy had been so completely unmasked, and the detection had exposed him to so much detestation, that he could hardly hope to escape a violent death. The rise and progress of this contemptible tyrant is well worthy of particular notice in the

history of these times. His talents at the bar brought him neither reputation nor bread. He was never known to the Public, till, in the early part of the French Revolution, he became the substitute of the Attorney-General for carrying on state prosecutions in the country, in which capacity he made his *début* on Mr. PHILLIPS, (now SIR RICHARD,) who had published Paine's Rights of Man. In the performance of this dirty work, which no man of any character at the Bar would have touched, he discovered a malignant zeal that effectually recommended him to those who had then so much work of this sort to have performed. He became, in succession, Solicitor General, Attorney General, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and first Lord of the Treasury. Until 1809, though regarded as a malignant man, he, like Wilberforce and the Thorntons, had the character of great purity of intention; was regarded as a very religious man; was seen always going to church of a Sunday with a great gilt Prayer Book under his arm, and surrounded by a large family of children, the having of which is always a great recommendation with this "thinking" nation, and, whether in king or minister, covers a multitude of follies and sins. Thus he had the best of reputations: "he was a good father, a good husband, and a very, very conscientious man; a man of excellent moral character." But, when in 1809, he was compelled to quit his place, or to stand forward the open and impudent defender of every species of profligacy, fraud, impiety, and corruption; when he was found to have been the associate of, and participator with, debauched clergymen and notorious prostitutes, in the trafficking of places, and when he stood convicted of bribery and perjury in the case of Quintin Dick, away went all his reputation, and he became an object of universal hatred. He knew this well; and, he seems, thenceforward, to have been actuated by a spirit of revenge against the whole nation. With GIBBS, who participated in the odium of 1809, for an Attorney General under him, and Ellenborough (his former associate) for Chief Justice, it seemed that they were resolved to inflict corporal punishment, of some sort or other, upon the whole people. They were all detested to the last degree, and they sought revenge. So that the death of Perceval was really a relief to the Boroughmongers, who felt

that he was rendering their sway more and more odious every day, and who, when they found that there was no conspiracy, scrupled not to laugh at the exit of "the little sharp-biting terrier," which was the appellation that they commonly gave him.

With Perceval died the project for establishing a fortress to keep London in awe; but, as I have stated in a former number, the metropolis is surrounded with a double line of Barracks; and, if we were to take the map of England we should see, that there is not any one spot, to which troops cannot be brought in the space of twenty-four hours. If this is not being under a military despotism, I should be very glad to be informed what a military despotism is.

CASTLEREAGH boldly tells us to our teeth, that the troops are necessary to insure the collection of the taxes; and, that, so far from it being economical to disband the army, a great deal of money must be lost by it, because the soldiers cause much more to be raised than it costs to support them! Let the world judge from this, of the state to which we are reduced. We are here told plainly, that a part of the people are to share in the taxes, upon condition that they will shoot at the other part of the people unless they pay the taxes. In the East Indies the fields of rice and corn are surrounded by troops, until the Aumils have made the owners pay the taxes that they choose to extort from them. Our Aumils have not gone this length yet; but, they have gone so far as to lay their injunctions upon corn in the rick or stack, or in the barn, and upon cattle and sheep. Castlereagh seems to have the complete system of the Aumils in reserve for us; and, though I do not believe that it will last long, I really expect to see the soldiers employed to accompany the tax-gatherers, all over the country, in England, as has long been the case in some parts of Ireland.

As for this last-mentioned part of the kingdom, it is at this moment as much under a military despotism as Poland or Prussia, and much worse treated than either of those countries now are, or ever were. There, the judges are always escorted from town to town through their death-dealing circuits by regular troops; they are guarded while on the bench by regular troops; they have guards to defend the houses where they sleep; the Sheriffs and Grand and Petit Juries are under the

protection of the bayonet ; the troops are in fact both jailers and executioners. And yet, the tyrants have the impudence to observe all the *forms* of legal proceedings, and to talk about the blessings of *liberty* enjoyed by the people, and which liberty makes this nation “the envy and admiration of the world.” But, when we reflect, that the whole of the *Church* of Ireland, (much richer in proportion than that of England,) that this immense mass of property, tithes, glebes, collegiate lands, manors, quit rents, fines, together with great real estates, is so much which the English Boroughmongers have grasped to their own use or benefit ; when we consider, that, out of even the *hundred Irish seats*, more than fifty are owned and filled by the English nobility ; when we consider that every office that an Englishman thinks worth his acceptance is given to Englishmen, the mere work of hanging and transporting being left to the worst of the native knaves ; when we consider, that Ireland, though taxed to support the English government, and tithed to support the English Church, is, as to commercial and maritime affairs, treated almost like a foreign country ; when we consider the extent and natural effects of this diabolical treatment of a hardy, brave, and generous-spirited people, it must be confessed, that if these Boroughmongers mean to *hold* Ireland at all, they must hold it by the bayonet.

The world has been grossly deceived as to the causes of Irish discontent. It is not Catholic emancipation ; it is not an imaginary suffering or privation ; it is not any suggestion of religious bigotry or antipathy. It is a series of oppressions of all kinds, and bearing upon all ranks, from the baronial mansion down to the very hovel. In that abused country the Aumil system is already in force. In that country the crop in many instances is arrested in the field, as well for taxes as for tithes. And, in such a state of things, nothing but force can maintain authority. Nor is it any particular set of ministers, to whom Ireland owes its oppressions. Much relief was expected from the whigs, especially when it was seen that Mr. GRATTAN was one of them. But (and it is a thing never to be forgotten) Mr. Grattan *drew up that very bill*, that bloody law, under which the half of the Irish nation are now shut up in their houses from sunset to sunrise, and under which thousands of them

have been hanged, transported, imprisoned, or flogged. This bill was *brought in* and passed by Perceval after the whigs had been displaced in 1807. SHERIDAN, who had not been in the *Cabinet*, though he had a place, made a violent speech against the bill ; calling it, as it deserved, every thing that was tyrannical, and accusing *its authors* of a design to render the Irish more completely slaves than the negroes of Jamaica. Upon which Perceval rose, and said, he was sorry that the Honourable Gentlemen had thus characterized *his own friends* in this instance, however they might possibly deserve it in *others* ; Down he sat. Sheridan stared about him. But the ministers, resolved to let out the secret, made a dirty tool of their own get up and say, that he had a right to presume, that the bill contained nothing improper, nothing of which Ireland ought to be ashamed, since the fact was, that it was left ready drawn up by the whigs, and that Mr. Grattan, that *true friend of Ireland*, was the man who drew it up ; the correctness of which statement Mr. Grattan, who was present, acknowledged.

The world has been astonished, that Mr. GRATTAN, like Burke, should thus *voluntarily* consign himself to everlasting infamy. It is curious enough that both these great Irish Patriots should have been brought over to the side of tyranny, not only by the same *means*, but means flowing through the same particular channel. Lord Fitzwilliam was become the patron and supporter of Grattan, as he had been of Burke. Grattan had been brought into parliament by *this Nobleman*, who has seats for Ireland as well as for England. He was, in short, dependent upon his patron as much, or very nearly as much, as a pauper is dependent upon the parish. What, then, becomes of the notion, entertained by foreigners, of the *power of Ministers* in this country ? At every step, we see, that it is an all-powerful band of Boroughmongers, who, in effect, -are the absolute masters of the country, and that the ministers are no more than a set of laborious, and enterprising, and audacious men, who, for the sake of getting something in the scramble, undertake to carry on the work.

But, besides the *wants* of England and Ireland, in the article, the staple commodity, of *troops*, CASTLEREAGH urged the necessity of keeping up a great establishment, in order that we might be *ready for war at any moment*. In any country where the people had a desire to live in peace, such an agreement under our present circumstances,

would be answered by stoning the orator half to death. We have destroyed all the means, in Europe, of annoying us by force. By *friendship* in some instances, and by *war* in other instances, we have annihilated all the navies of Europe, while our own has been increased threefold. And yet we affect to *fear* for our safety ! And, upon this very ground, a naval establishment of *thirty three thousand men* is proposed, and will be carried. Nay, more, it will be carried without the smallest opposition ; and even with the approbation of those who are to be ruined by paying the taxes. England should be represented with a drawn sword in one hand and with chains and fetters in the other : the former she ever has ready for the rest of mankind ; the latter for her own people. Will nothing cure this people of their love of war ? Will they never suffer the world to have rest ? Will they always think that the humiliation and misery of other nations are necessary to their own safety, though nature seems to have so placed them as to enable them to live in endless friendship with all the world ?

So far is it necessary for the Ministers to offer any justification of their conduct for having planned this great naval peace establishment, that they have not a little to do to satisfy people, that they have not *already proceeded too fast and too far* in the work of *reduction*. On this subject a very curious, and, to you, Americans, a very *interesting* little conversation took place in the House of Commons, on the 14th instant. A Mr. LAW, a son of the Lord Chief Justice, Ellenborough, for which son a seat has been recently obtained in the usual way, and which son is, by the by, *jailer* of the King's bench prison, and receives jailer's fees, asked why the naval establishment was less now than at the peace of Amiens ; and added, "that since the putting down of the power of France a very hostile spirit had existed in the *American Congress*, "and that *America and Russia* were manifestly approximating in all manner of ways. He begged "the ministers to look round amongst the powers of Europe, and to be upon the watch, for that they were all *jealous of us*." Which jealousy is, to be sure, very unreasonable, seeing what an unambitious, and harmless, and inoffensive, and feeble race we are ! CASTLEREAGH, who saw the mischievous tendency of the expressions of this over-watchful and yet incautious young jailer, gently reproved him by observing, that he had no reason to suspect a hostile feeling on the part of *America* or any other power, though the fact had just transpired, that, only a year ago he actually engaged this country in a *defensive alliance* with Prussia, Austria and France against *Russia* : and though it is notorious, that Colonel NICHOLLS of the Marines, has now an Indian Chief, lately brought from America, with whom he is in constant attendance and consultation at the office of the Secretary for the Colonial Department !

The American reader may be disposed to laugh at this sally of the jailer ; at this jailer-like idea of *watching* all the powers of the world to see if any two of them are *laying their heads together* ; to see if there be any two persons who dare to be friends without our leave ; to see if there be any harmony, which our insatiable thirst for strife can disturb. The reader, in the peaceful regions of America, may be disposed to laugh at the malignity and insolence of this pocketor of jail fees ; but, jailer as he really is, and that, too, recorded in the report of a committee of the very House in which he sits ; and though it be possible, and even likely, that he has bought his seat in the House with the money received in his capacity of head jailer, still his words are not to be despised, however just it may be to detest the utterer of them. For, we may be

well assured, that this thought did not originate with him, that he had been taught it, that he had been instructed to express it ; that he was in this case, the mere mouth-piece of his father, and others of still greater weight, and of far greater weight, perhaps, than all the ministers put together.

Therefore his words are not to be despised ; and, if America be wise, and really wishes to live in peace with this besotted, and obstinate, and turbulent country, she must *build ships* and *cast cannons*. At this moment, indeed, there may be no settled design to go to war with America. I wish there never may be. But, to say that *I hope* as much, would be to go beyond the truth ; for, whether I look at the past or the present disposition of either the government or the people, I can see no solid ground whereon to build such a hope. I wish most sincerely, that the whole world was so armed as to compel us to live at peace. I wish there was not a single spot on the earth where we could discover a temptation to indulge in our deadly propensity, to subdue, conquer, and kill. The feebleness, which internal distress may, and, in all likelihood, will produce, may tend to keep us quiet for a time. But, shocking as the thought is, I verily believe, that we should shake off the whole of the debt, sacrifice public faith, and, with our eyes open, plunge millions in misery at home, in order to bring all our resources to bear upon foreign nations, if amongst the whole of them, we could, by any invention, conjure up an enemy.

Let it not be said, or thought, that I *buckbite my countrymen* ; for I have said ten times worse of them to their face. For their own happiness it is necessary, that they should be prevented, by a formidable obstacle, in some part or other of the world, from again rushing into war. It is a very great error to suppose, that we shall become peacefully inclined in consequence of feeling, as we now do, the distresses occasioned by war ; for, with very few exceptions, we do not now believe, manifest as the fact is, that these distresses have arisen from the war. Nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand ascribe the distresses to the *taxes*. Indeed, this is clear enough ; but, they do not at all connect the taxes with the war. It signifies nothing to say, that this is a mark of beastly stupidity. That does not at all alter the fact. Such is the character of the people ; and all the reasoning and eloquence in the world will not alter it.

In my letters to Lord Liverpool, during the last American war, I very often stated, that the war was *popular*. But, if I were to say to what an extent it was popular, I should, out of England, hardly stand a chance of being believed. It was not to the rabble ; not to the farmers, not to the people, in middle ranks of life, that this popularity was confined. I know several Gentlemen, not only of good understanding, great talents, and excellent moral characters, but, generally speaking, of sound political principles, real friends of liberty at home and abroad, and even enemies to the war against the French ; and yet, as zealous as Liverpool himself for maintaining the "*right*" of impressing native Americans into our service ! Aye, and regretting that we had made a peace without obtaining a recognition of that "*right*." What but this degree of popularity could have induced Mr. ALEXANDER BARING to acknowledge that the war was a *war of aggression* on the part of *America* ? He knew better. There was no political man of sense who did not know better. The *Orders in Council* affected the manufacturers, and had nothing at least, nothing very clearly connected with our maritime sway. The opposition did, therefore, venture to oppose the continuation of them ; but, Perceval saw very plainly, that the giving them up would not be sufficient to satisfy the Congress ; and,

he knew well, that there was not a man in the House, besides SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, who would dare to risk a stand against the "right" of England to impress Native American seamen. Monstrous as this may appear, (and monstrous it must appear,) it is perfectly true; and, therefore, to suppose, that any appeal to the justice of the people of England, upon this subject, or any other of the same nature, will ever have any weight, is to show very little knowledge indeed of the state and propensity of their minds.

Nor is it of any use to tell them, that, in enabling their government thus to oppress and render miserable other countries, they, at the same time, enable that same government to make *slaves* of themselves. They feel this, and many of them are quite ready to acknowledge it. But, still, it works no cure. It does not, as far as I have ever been able to discover, slacken in the smallest degree, their love of war and thirst for domination. To describe their political feelings in one sentence: they hate their government for its oppressions on themselves; and they love it for the miseries it inflicts on other nations. They rail against the Property Tax, call it an Inquisitorial, despotic, and infamous tax; a disgraceful badge of slavery; an oppression not to be endured. But, in returning home from one of their petitioning meetings, they will exultingly talk of the *dethroning* of the KING OF CANDY, and of the arrival of his golden throne in England, which, by the by, has just taken place. I wish, that, in every land, where freedom really exists, and where the government really studies the happiness of the people, there were only one tenth part as much *devotion to country* as there is in England! This devotion, indeed, has a wrong direction, and is productive, in consequence of that direction, of great calamities; but, in itself considered, it is good, and worthy of the imitation of all the nations in the world.

Before I conclude, I must just notice, as an instance of the *sham* of the Debates, that Lord GRENVILLE, on the 14th instant, made a most excellent speech *against the keeping of a standing army in time of peace*. He said, it was hostile to the *Constitution*; just as if he did not, while in place, introduce *himself*, not less, perhaps, than twenty acts of parliament to repeal some of the most important parts of the great constitutional laws of the country; just as if he had not assisted in violating all the old laws for the protection of property and of personal liberty; just as if he had not sat for 7 years in a cabinet which imprisoned men at its pleasure, kept them in prison for years, never produced any charges against them, and, at the end of the time, procured an *act of indemnity* for their conduct; just as if he and his colleagues had not, in defiance of the act of settlement, brought foreign officers into the kingdom and given them places of trust and emolument; just as if he had not had a bill passed to authorize him to hold a sinecure of *four thousand pounds* a year as auditor, while he held a real place of *six thousand pounds* a year, one of which offices is, by law, to be a *check* upon the other. Just as if his whole political life, leaving common corruption out of question, has not been one continued series of violations of the Constitution as it existed only twenty-five years ago. Who that recollects these things can look upon this talk about the *Constitution*, from the mouth of such a man as being any thing more than a mere *sham*; any thing more than a *blind*; than a *tub* to the Gaping Whale? Yet, this has been read with applause; and, if any one were to say of it what I

have here said, he would be in prison in twenty-four hours "by the order of their Lordships," and without any form of trial. Thus, while delusion is poured copiously forth with one hand, truth is kept close confined with the other.

Messrs. TIERNEY and PONSONBY have been *figuring* in the same sort of way: the first a notorious place-hunter; the second a pensioner at four thousand pounds a year, the product of his connexion by marriage with Lord GREY. These men, who both assisted in bringing in the German Troops, now talk of that *Constitution* which forbade it. Tierney, who is a mere lacquey member of the Duke of Bedford, has been, as it is called, *upon the streets* for more than fifteen years. There is no ministry, to which he has not offered himself; but he never found admission into any one except for a very short time. There is hardly a corrupt transaction, to which he has not brought the support of his very great talents; but, he is that sort of man, that all men, even the most corrupt, like best at a distance.

So that, as to *opposition* to this really *war-establishment*, I should suppose there will be none. The thing seems resolved on. The Boroughmongers seem to think, that, for the present, they cannot trust this staff out of their hands, as far even as regards France. The distress which the taxes will occasion at home will be very great; but, bitter as the pill may prove, it will go down with the aid of the bayonet.

WM. COBBETT.

P. S. LAW THE JAILER.—Having mentioned Mr. LAW, the Chief Justice's son, as being the Jailer of the King's Bench Prison, I will introduce here, an epigram, on the subject, sent to me more than a year ago, and for the *facts* of which I vouch, having in my possession the Report of the Committee, containing the *Deputy Jailer*, Jones's, examination upon oath. A more recent Committee, of which Mr. Bennet, Lord Tankerville's son, was Chairman, have recently made a fresh report upon the abuses, and cruelties, and *extortions* of this Jail, which, perhaps, I shall notice more fully another time. The epigram relates to the former report, which brought to light the curious fact, that the *Lord Chief Justice's son* was *bona fide* a Jailer, and, being abroad on his *travels*, and a *minor*, the father received the amount of the fees for him.

When England's Chief Jailer was called to account,
And compell'd of his profits to state the amount,
The Committee observed that the sum was too large
For one, who had merely of pris'ners the charge.
"The sum!" exclaimed JONES, "why, the Chief Judge's son,

"A lad, who abroad on his travels is gone,
"Is the Jailer in fact, by his father selected;
"And to him I account for whatever's collected;
"But the son being yet but an infant in law,
"The Noble Lord takes what the latter would draw."

Fair Justice of England! what ills can assail her?
While the father's Chief Judge, the son is Chief Jailer!

His zeal yet a step would the Noble Peer stretch,
Let him take his next heir, and make him Jack-Ketch.

One cannot help feeling shame for one's country, in the promulgating, and spreading, far and wide, such facts as these; but, they are true, they are due to the world, and they ought not to be suppressed. Here a man would be fined and imprisoned for publishing only this Epigram. Though every word of it be notoriously true.

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